

I. INTRODUCTION

Phase II significance evaluations of two archaeological sites within the Sarro Wetland Replacement Site, Kent County, Delaware, have been carried out by the Cultural Resource Group of Louis Berger & Associates, Inc. (LBA). The evaluations were conducted by LBA for the Division of Highways of the Delaware Department of Transportation (DelDOT) under Parent Agreement No. 729. The sites, 7K-C-394 and 7K-C-396, were located in the eastern half of Area 4, a proposed wetland replacement area for the State Route (SR) 1 project located northeast of Dover (Figures 1 and 2). The wetland replacement area, as acquired by DelDOT, measures approximately 80 acres, and the area to be impacted by the mitigation comprises approximately 47 acres. Sites 7K-C-394 and 7K-C-396 had been located during a Phase I cultural resource survey of the SR 1 corridor conducted by the University of Delaware Center for Archaeological Research (UDCAR). The results of UDCAR's investigation revealed that these two sites were potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The investigations conducted by LBA and presented in this report were designed to evaluate Sites 7K-C-394 and 7K-C-396 for their National Register eligibility, so that DelDOT could carry out its obligations under Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The evaluations were conducted according to the standards set down in the *Guidelines for Architectural and Archaeological Surveys in Delaware* (Delaware State Historic Preservation Office 1993).

Site 7K-C-394, also known as the Alexander Laws Farm Site, consists of the archaeological remains of a farmstead established by the middle of the nineteenth century. Aerial photographs taken for the Kent County Planning Department indicate that a house and a modern concrete block barn were standing on the site as late as 1968. The house was demolished sometime after 1968 and prior to 1990. The barn was bulldozed into spoil piles inside the adjacent tree line during February of 1991. Following the demolition of the structures, the site location was entirely plowed and put under cultivation. The Phase I survey conducted by UDCAR at Site 7K-C-394 consisted of shovel testing at 20- and 40-foot intervals in the former house yard areas as depicted on nineteenth- and twentieth-century maps. The results of the shovel testing completed during the Phase I investigation revealed a high-density historic artifact concentration at the presumed former house location. In addition, a soil anomaly, designated Feature 1, was identified west of the house location, and limited quantities of historic artifacts were found to occur below the plowzone in several locations. The house and barn areas were noted by LBA investigators as being marked by light surface scatters of concrete, brick, and other artifacts. The site was evaluated within a historic context developed for the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office, *Agriculture and Rural Life in New Castle and Kent Counties, 1830-1940* (De Cunzo and Garcia 1992), to determine if the site could yield information important to the history of Delaware or Little Creek Hundred.

Site 7K-C-396 is one of several prehistoric sites located along the low-lying banks adjacent to Muddy Branch. The site is marked by a series of low-density scatters over an area

measuring approximately 200x800 feet, all of which is contained within plowed and formerly plowed fields associated with the Alexander Laws Farm. The Phase I UDCAR investigations consisted of 109 shovel tests excavated at 20- and 40-foot intervals. The results of UDCAR's work indicated that several loci of prehistoric activity might be present. Prehistoric cultural remains recovered during the Phase I testing include prehistoric pottery, a chert stemmed point, and a possible feature consisting of charcoal flecks below the plowzone. Seven of the shovel tests, primarily in the central and northeastern portions of the site, contained lithic debitage below the plowzone. Grit-tempered pottery, possibly Minguannan ceramics, was concentrated in tests in the southern portion of the site, primarily within the tree line. The site was evaluated within the historic contexts for Delaware prehistory developed for the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office and presented in the *Management Plan for Delaware's Prehistoric Cultural Resources* (Custer 1986) and *Stability, Storage, and Culture Change in Prehistoric Delaware: The Woodland I Period* (Custer 1994) to determine if the site could yield information important to the prehistory of the state.

The Phase II scope of work for Sites 7K-C-394 and 7K-C-396 provided for the excavation of ten 1x2-meter (or the equivalent) test units at each site, and ten discretionary units to be excavated conditionally at either site depending on the results of the initial testing. In addition, an estimated 25 shovel tests were proposed at each site for the purpose of boundary refinement, with a further 25 discretionary shovel tests to be excavated at either site if required for other purposes. Background research to document the ownership/tenancy history of the farm included a review of deed, probate, and census records, and an examination of available cartographic documents.

Fieldwork was performed during the period from June 27 to August 5, 1994. Charles LeeDecker was the Project Manager and Randolph Taylor acted as Principal Investigator. Henry Holt supervised the field crew, which consisted of Kimber Budrow, Lorraine Durr, David Gilmour, Kevin Holliday, Julie Holt, Earl Proper, Paul Stansfield, and Anita Vyas. Historical research for the Alexander Laws Farm Site was conducted by Ingrid Wuebber. For the laboratory analysis and report production, John H. Sprinkle, Jr. served as Project Manager and John Bedell as Principal Investigator. The report was written by John Bedell, incorporating portions of the management summary written by Ingrid Wuebber and Henry Holt.